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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

25X1A

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Highway Travel, Tbilisi to Gori/Railway Travel,
Baku to Tbilisi, Kharkov to Odessa, Odessa to
Kiev/New Construction/Route to Baku/SecurityPLACE ACQUIRED Restrictions in Baku
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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. Q. Describe any roads on which you had occasion to drive.

A. I drove from Tbilisi to Gori, Stalin's home, a distance of about 60 miles. The road seemed to be black topped although because of packed snow it was a little difficult to tell exactly. It is two lanes wide and there was very little auto traffic, little if any truck traffic, and quite a few ox carts. There were no large bridges en route.

2. Q. Describe the railroads on which you traveled.

A. Baku to Tbilisi: I am not certain but I believe that the route was double-tracked all the way. This is evidently a main line to transport oil from Baku. All engines on the line were steam powered. There were no tunnels and only one bridge over a river near Baku.

Kharkov to Odessa: This is a double-tracked road without any bridges along the way. I saw only steam engines.

Odessa to Kiev: This is also a double-tracked road. I saw what I thought was unusually heavy traffic from the direction of Kiev. It was mainly freight, and again I saw only steam engines.

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3. Q. Did you observe any new construction of dams, canals, powerlines or pipelines?
- A. I didn't notice any of these specific things being built, but there was a great deal of building construction going on. They were even restoring some churches in Gori. The buildings under construction looked very flimsy to me. I've spent my last two summers working on construction gangs and their work didn't begin to compare with ours.
4. Q. How did you go to Baku?
- A. We flew from Moscow to Baku with a one and one half hour lay-over at Astrakhan.
5. Q. When you were in Baku, did you get an opportunity to get an overall view of the town?
- A. Yes. I remember particularly being up on a high promontory overlooking the harbor. Our guide asked us not to take any pictures of the harbor, but we did anyway, and they didn't say anything. This was true wherever we went. They'd ask us not to do something, we'd go ahead and do it anyway, and they didn't seem to care. They were following orders but didn't worry about whether they were carried out as long as they could say that they'd tried. Once, one of our guides asked us not to take any pictures until he checked to see if there were any naval vessels in sight. When he gave us the signal to go ahead, I looked through my view finder and there was a Soviet destroyer in the way. I said, "Hey, what about that one?" He looked again and said, "Well, maybe you'd better not take any pictures. I missed that one."

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